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ABSTRACT

The multiple roles of a contemporary Black college president are discussed and defined, focusing on the changing role of the president. Like their White counterparts, presidents of the nation's 117 historically Black colleges have seen their roles evolve as they have become savvy promoters, competing aggressively for students and philanthropic dollars. The nine key areas in which presidential leadership has been most critical in catalyzing a renaissance at LeMoyn-Owen College are reviewed, noting the importance of a blended style of presidential skills and a strategic plan in sustaining the drive toward excellence and equity in institutional renewal. These areas are as follows: board development; administration; fund development; community outreach (public responsibility); faculty and staff competence; positioning the college; curriculum renewal; enrollment management; and outcomes assessment. It is indicated that the power of the presidency at this school has not lost power and is unique in institutions that are in crisis and needing to undergo major transformations of mission, structure, and curriculum. As a Black college, LeMoyne-Owen College has made the commitment to elevate the expectations of the youth from the surrounding inner-city community and to prepare them for lives of productivity, leadership, and responsible citizenship. (SM)

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THE CHANGING JOB OF THE PRESIDENT

PAPER PRESENTED AT PANEL:
THE CHANGING CONDITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

1989 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
APRIL 4, 1989

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The role of the American college president continues to be a major topic of discourse within the higher education community. As Clark Kerr and Marian L. Gade note in The Many Lives of Academic Presidents: Time, Place, and Character (Association of Governing Boards of Universities and College, Washington, D.C., 1986), approximately five thousand people will serve as college and university presidents during the 1980's and a similar number in the 1990's -- ten thousand people by the end of the century. Overall the fortunes of institutions of higher education in the United States will be influenced more by the vision and actions of these ten thousand presidents than by any other group of similar size within the academic community.

Kerr and Gade, while portraying the potential strength and influence of the college presidency, also point out the changing role of the presidency. In their view, the college presidency has lost power, is increasingly constrained by external and internal forces, and requires developed skill in handling multiple roles, multiple perspectives, and multiple constituencies.

Like their white counterparts, presidents of the nation's 117 historically Black colleges have seen their roles evolve as they have become savvy promoters, competing aggressively for students and philanthropic dollars. Gone are the days when Black-college presidents enjoyed a near monopoly on Black-college hopefuls. Today, they are more inclined to run their schools like a business, placing corporate brass on their boards and going head to head with top white schools for the most promising Black youths.

This brief presentation defines the multiple roles of a contemporary-Black college president. Drawn principally from my 21-month tenure as the seventh President of LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, Tennessee, this will be a review of the nine key areas where presidential leadership has been most critical in catalyzing a renaissance at the College and will point to the importance of a blended style of presidential skills -- high skill in management and high vision in leadership -- in sustaining the drive toward excellence and equity in institutional renewal at LeMoyn-Owen College.

DEFINING THE MULTIPLE ROLES OF A CONTEMPORARY COLLEGE PRESIDENT

John J. Corson noted (The Governance of Colleges and Universities: Modernizing Structure and Process, New York, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1975) that successful presidents must provide leadership to their institutions in at least five areas: (1) leading the faculty by searching for, recognizing, and encouraging promising curricular, instructional, and research ideas; (2) fostering a positive perspective of the institution in the eyes of its students and its alumni/ae; (3) working closely with the trustees; (4) developing a strong staff and administrative structure; and (5) representing the institution to external constituencies and manifesting a capacity to lead in the communities which lie beyond the institution. These individuals could well be described as Clark Kerr's "mediator-innovators," those who mediate among the values of the past, the prospects for the future, and the realities of the present (The Uses of the University, Cambridge, Harvard University, 1982).

Strategic Plan

"If you don't know where you are going, any road will lead you there" is a statement attributed to the Koran. A strategic plan is a framework for carrying out strategic thinking, direction, and action leading to the achievement of consistent and planned results. As President, the development and approval of a strategic plan for LeMoyne-Owen College was the single most important function of the first year of my presidency. After three months of extensive discussions with trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, and students, a Senior Planning Team, chaired by the President, and an External Planning Advisory Team were organized. We worked for seven months to develop a strategic plan comprising the following elements: a bold and aggressive mission statement for the College, strategic analysis, key results areas, strategy, long-term objectives, risk analysis, integrated programs, financial projections, and strategic plan implementation. This was the first strategic plan ever developed in the distinguished 126-year history of the College.

Key Results Areas (KRA's)

Nine KRA's -- major factors that decisively affect and influence the direction of the College -- were identified for the strategic plan:

1.0 Board Development

2.0 Administation

3.0 Fund Development

4.0 Community Outreach (Public Responsibility)

5.0 Faculty and Staff Competence

6.0 Positioning the College

7.0 Curriculum Renewal

8.0 Enrollment Management

9.0 Outcomes Assessment

Each of these KRA's has required multiple management and leadership roles and responsibilities for the President.

1.0 Board Development. The development of the Board of Trustees as an organization is critical to the success of LeMoyne-Owen College during the next five years. Through an ongoing process of Board Development, we have sought to improve the Board's organization and performance, and to enable the Board to understand and improve its participation in fund-raising. We have participated in the Association of Governing Board's Institute for Trustee Leadership and Board-Mentor Program; the Board Bylaws have been reviewed; Standing Committees of the Board have been restructured; Full Board Meetings have been restructured to reflect a more corporate model; and 12 new Trustees have been appointed, the majority of whom are from the corporate world. The President has been prepared to aggressively participate in a major restructuring of the Board of Trustees in order to meet the requirements of the strategic plan.

2.0 Administration. The successful implementation of the strategic plan depends largely on the identification of a mission-oriented, dynamic and enlightened administration. A major

administrative reorganization was completed by July 1, 1989 with the identification of four new Vice Presidents to head four new administrative divisions of the College -- Finance and Administration, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Development Affairs. The Office of the President was reorganized to include five new support positions: Senior Assistant to the President/Board of Trustees Liaison; Administrative Assistant to the President; Administrative Secretary to the President; Assistant to the President for Planning, Research, and Assessment; and Special Assistant to the President for Community Outreach (Public Responsibility).

Upon the arrival of the President in July, 1987, there were highly held perceptions on campus that standardized policies and procedures needed to be established in several areas of the College to ensure more effective and efficient operation. Several new policy and procedure manuals have been developed in each of the administrative divisions of the College to address this need.

In 1987, 17 of the United Negro College Fund's (U.N.C.F.) members were in the red. Last summer, Dallas' Bishop College went under after a long struggle with bankruptcy. Preoccupation with financial management comprised the largest share of the President's time in his first 18 months. The recruitment of a new Vice President for Finance and Administration and a new Controller, and the restructuring of the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees; and tough new policies in purchasing and procurement, U.N.C.F. disbursement, and student accounts receivable enabled the College to implement financial controls and to cope more effectively with fiscal management.

3.0 Fund Development. The College has embarked this year on its most organized and ambitious Annual Fund Campaign. With a goal of $600,000, we have -- for the first time -- secured major corporate leadership for the Annual Fund Campaign and targeted local corporations and businesses for substantial giving at the level of $200,000. We need two consecutive years (1988-89 and 1989-90) of strong Annual Fund Campaigns to build momentum for the College's first multi-year Capital Campaign which we hope to announce by Fall, 1990.

The role of the President in fund development has been substantial. Several hours each week have been set aside for development calls with the Board Chairman and other Trustees to cultivate prospective donors. Extensive public speaking in churches and before major civic groups -- Rotary and Kiwanis -- and community groups, and participation on several non-profit boards and advisory committees are extending the awareness of the vision for the future and the pressing needs of the College throughout Memphis, Shelby County, and the State of Tennessee.

4.0 Community Outreach (Public Responsibility). LeMoyne-Owen College, as a member of the community, has accepted a major responsibility for improving the quality of life in its neighborhood. Led by the President's vision to have the College serve as a beacon of hope for young Black men and women in the immediate neighborhood, the College has adopted the LeMoyne Gardens Housing Development, a low-income project sitting directly across the street from the

College. We have developed four externally funded projects -- a Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program pairing 22 administrators, faculty, and staff with children and youth in the project; a Drug Abuse Prevention Program pairing a sociology professor with 150 junior high/middle school students in workshops on the dangers of drugs; a Young Parents Training Program pairing a College social worker with teenage mothers and fathers to discuss parenting, child development, and survival skills for parent and child; and an After-School Homework Center pairing College Work-Study students and other students with children and youth to assist with homework, tutoring in basic subjects, and motivation for academic achievement.

In addition, the President serves as a voluntary consultant to the LeMoyne Gardens Tenants Association on issues in tenant advocacy and tenant management. The College is also actively involved in the Free the Children initiative launched by Shelby County Mayor William N. Morris, Jr. The Henry J. Kaiser Foundation last week awarded the Free the Children initiative a grant of $1.074 million to be used to develop a pilot program known as the Memphis Pre-Science Scholars Program. The Kaiser grant is the result of a two-year effort by the Chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Memphis, the President of LeMoyne-Owen College, and the Superintendent of the Memphis City Schools.

5.0 Faculty and Staff Competence. The President established the design and implementation of a College-wide Performance Appraisal System, improved salary and benefits for all employees, and expanded options for faculty and professional staff development as key requirements for this KRA. The College's first professional in personnel administration was recruited and a new plan for Performance Appraisal has been initiated. We anticipate a five-percent COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) for July 1, 1989, the College's first employee raise in two years. A major review of the College's inadequate benefits package is underway and new options for College employees in retirement planning and long-term disability coverage have been explored. Major grants from Title III and the Bush Foundation have expanded faculty development opportunities as they relate to curriculum renewal goals and objectives.

6.0 Positioning the College. We are developing a marketing plan for the College with the assistance of a consultant. A Marketing Committee comprising administrators, faculty, and staff has been creatively and enthusiastically designing structured approaches to reflect the new aggressive mission and vision of the College. The role of the President in this KRA has been to capture the attention of the news media and the public through public speaking, interviews, contributing articles to local newspapers on the role of Black Colleges, etc.

7.0 Curriculum Renewal. Commentators on the state of the college presidency have observed that external demands have required the attention of the president be directed to his or her external obligations, allowing faculties, provosts, deans, and others to preempt increasing shares of the educational leadership once the president's domain. Several recent articles and books challenge this leadership style (Derek Bok, Higher Learning, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1987; Joseph F. Kauffman, "Profile of the Presidency in the Next Decade," Educational Record, Spring 1984; and Robert M. O'Neill, "University Presidents' Changing Modes of Leadership," Liberal Education, Vol. 93, No. 2, March/April 1987). O'Neill affirms Bok's hope that academic leaders may still bring about significant change and educational reform. Kauffman sees the general concern with the quality of higher education -- curriculum, teaching, the condition of general education -- as signals to college presidents to reassert themselves as leaders with vision, "leadership that cherishes the essential value of educational institutions and their potential for dignifying humanity and shaping its destiny."

The President has devoted the second most significant amount of time (after financial management) to the curriculum renewal effort. Coming to LeMoyne-Owen College from several years as Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs at another institution, the President was steeped in the literature and the experience of launching a review of general education and designing a Core Curriculum. In his

second weekend on campus, the President sat with faculty leaders and development staff to write the initial College application for Title III funds. As a group, we decided that curriculum renewal would be the focus of our application and that a review of the condition of general education and the design of a unique Core Curriculum -- integrating basic skills and African and African-American Studies in a more coherent study of the disciplines -- would represent the benchmark of our curriculum renewal efforts. We also decided that our August 1987 Faculty Institute would focus on this issue, including a major address by the President on curriculum renewal.

We have now been funded for two consecutive years by Title III and our curriculum renewal objectives are well underway. A brilliant Faculty Committee on the Core Curriculum, chaired by a former Professor of History who now also serves as Associate Dean of the Faculty, has developed several pilot core courses. Further, the academic program of LeMoyne-Owen College has been renewed through the following new thrusts:

(1) Division of Teacher Education

(2) Division of Lifelong Learning (now headed by a new Associate Dean for Lifelong Learning).

(3) W.E.B. DuBois Scholars Program

(4) Center for Faculty and Instructional Development

(5) Physics Professor (national search underway)

(6) Music Major

(7) Freshman Year Experience Program

(8) Psychology Professor (appointed Fall, 1988)

(9) Theater Professor (appointed Fall, 1987)

(10) Learning Skills Center

Major funding from the Bush Foundation has resulted in the implementation of a Faculty and Instructional Development Program geared to the developing Core Curriculum. Finally, a five-year cycle of Academic Program Reviews has been launched under the direction of the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of the Faculty.

In all of the above activities in curriculum renewal, the President has been guided by a maxim first discovered at Harvard IEM in 1988, referred to here as the Arthur Levine Rule, which argues that resources follow programming. We are discovering at LeMoyne-Owen College that focusing on curriculum is the best way for us to thrive in hard times. The President must be at the forefront of curriculum renewal.

8.0 Enrollment Management. Two-thirds of the 42 schools currently represented by the U.N.C.F have seen an increase in enrollment this academic year. LeMoyne-Owen College experienced a record 23 percent increase in enrollment in Fall, 1988. The Spring, 1989 enrollment is up 11 percent from Spring, 1988. Our current 1005 FTE enrollment is an all-time high Spring enrollment.

A Presidential Task Force on Enrollment Management established in September, 1987 produced outstanding recommendations from its

subcommittees on Pricing and Financial Aid; Institutional Research; Marketing and Recruitment; Orientation, Advising, and Student Services; and Student Involvement in Learning. The new aggressive posture of the College in all aspects of its operation, including Enrollment Management, and the heightened visibility of the College and its President in the community have contributed to our record enrollments. Attention has now been focused on student retention. A new Student Retention Model has been designed by the Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students and is currently under review.

9.0 Outcomes Assessment. A Presidential Task Force on Outcomes Assessment, organized in September, 1987, has designed an Outcomes Assessment Model for LeMoyne-Owen College. The President initially established the basic parameters of the model to include the following dimensions:

(1) Early in a Student's Career

1. Do placement testing in key academic skill areas.
2. Test before and after remedial/developmental courses.
3. Design competency-based courses.
4. Collect data for assessing changes in student knowledge, values, etc.

(2) During Middle Years

1. Identify desired outcomes for the Core Curriculum and develop ways to show how they are achieved.
2. Identify desired outcomes in major fields of study and develop ways to show how they are achieved.

3. Develop methods for evaluating proficiency levels that students achieve in writing, critical thinking, and other general competencies.

4. Conduct continuing or periodic surveys of student values and attitudes.

5. Review students' transcripts, papers, examinations, etc.

(3) At College Completion

1. Develop comprehensive examinations and interviews, or other ways to demonstrate accomplishments of graduates.
2. Obtain information on placement rates (into jobs or for further schooling).

The Task Force has designed evaluation methodology for each level of the above framework and is piloting several levels of the framework this academic year. This project is under the direction of the Assistant to the President for Planning, Research, and Assessment.

VISION IN LEADERSHIP

The experience of the President over the past 21 months would suggest that the presidency has, in fact, not lost power. Perhaps the power of the presidency is unique in institutions that are in crisis and needing to undergo major transformations of mission,

structure, and curriculum. Clearly the skills of management described by Kerr and Gade, especially the ability to manage the complex, competing, and multiple demands of the presidential position, have been important in the President's tenure to date. But it is the President's vision for LeMoyne-Owen College that more than anything else has sustained him in this challenge.

The special role of historical Black colleges was documented most recently in a major four-year study by Jacqueline Fleming (Blacks in College, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1985). Dr. Fleming's study, conducted with support of The Carnegie Corporation of New York, was the first to compare the impact of predominantly Black colleges with that of other colleges on the intellectual development of Black students.

Among her findings were that Black students in predominantly Black collges tend to experience greater cognitive growth than Blacks in white colleges. As reported and interpreted by Dr. Fleming:

> ...Black colleges appear to effectively impart the orientation and skills that allow Black students to function well in the larger society: aspiration, confidence, motivation, and the ability to enjoy competition in the integrated world... If we allow Black colleges to serve as a stepping stone for those who wish to become part of the larger society, these institutions might become a stronger aid to integration than we ever imagined.

Since their founding, these institutions have produced more than 70 percent of Black college graduates. More than 50 percent of the nation's Black business executives and elected officials are graduates of Black colleges. These institutions have also graduated 75 precent of Blacks with Ph.D. degrees, 75 percent of Black military officers, 80 percent of Black federal judges, and 85 percent of Black physicians.

Black colleges were founded to serve those who had been severely crippled by slavery and the ravages of poverty. These institutions have continued through the years to elevate disadvantaged youth to creative citizenship and major leadership positions in all areas of national life.

As a Black college, LeMoyne-Owen College has made the commitment to elevate the expectations of the youth from the surrounding inner-city coummunity and to prepare them for lives of productivity, leadership, and responsible citizenship. That is why LeMoyne-Owen will continue to serve as a <u>beacon of hope</u>; that is the <u>vision</u> which sustains the challenge of management and leadership at LeMoyne-Owen College.